

Message Text

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70

ACTION SCS-03

INFO OCT-01 ARA-10 EUR-12 ISO-00 DHA-02 H-02 L-03 PPT-01

SCA-01 PA-02 PRS-01 SSO-00 NSCE-00 SS-15 NSC-05 /058 W

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O 162141Z JUL 75

FM AMCONSUL BELIZE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 4178

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON NIACT IMMEDIATE

UNCLAS BELIZE 420

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: CASC (MOORE, ALTON WAYNE)

SUBJECT: ALTON MOORE'S PLEA FOR MERCY

REF: BELIZE 419

1. TEXT OF CONDEMNED AMCIT ALTON WAYNE MOORE'S PLEA FOR MERCY
TO QUEEN ELIZABETH AS FOLLOWS:

I WAS TOLD THIS MORNING THAT THE DATE FOR MY EXECUTION HAS BEEN
SET FOR JULY 22, 1975.

I AM NOT SURE THAT IN MY CONDITION I CAN EXPRESS MYSELF WELL
ENOUGH TO MAKE A SENSIBLE PLEA FOR MERCY. I AM A POOR MAN IN
A FOREIGN COUNTRY WITH NO HOPE EXCEPT YOUR MAJESTY'S GRACE AND
MERCY.

I CAN ONLY SAY THAT I HAVE NEVER HAD THE INTENT TO KILL MR.
PITTS OR ANYONE ELSE. NOT BEFORE, NOT THEN, AND NOT THEREAFTER.
WE DID GET DRUNK AND WE DID HAVE A SEVERE FIGHT. I KNOW I AM
RESPONSIBLE FOR THE DEATH OF MY FRIEND, MR. PITTS, BUT I NEVER
WISHED TO KILL HIM.

AS I UNDERSTAND IT, CAUSING THE DEATH OF ANOTHER PERSON IS
MANSLAUGHTER. IT IS MURDER ONLY IF THERE WAS INTENT TO KILL.
WE WERE ALL DRINKING HEAVILY AND UNDER SEVERE PROVOCATION I
MUST HAVE LOST CONTROL BUT I NEVER INTENDED TO KILL ANYONE.

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I KNOW THAT I HAVE BEEN CONVICTED OF MURDER BY A JURY OF BELIZE, BRITISH HONDURAS, THROUGH DUE PROCESS OF LAW. TO DO SO THE JURY MUST HAVE FELT I HAD THE INTENT TO KILL MR. PITTS. YET THEY WERE NOT TOLD OF THE ALCOHOL WE DRANK OR THE FIGHT THAT WE HAD.

MY COURT APPOINTED ATTORNEY ENTERED A PLEA OF NOT GUILTY BECAUSE HE WAS APPARENTLY CONVINCED THAT HE COULD WIN TECHNICALITIES AND THE MANY CONTRADICTIONS IN TESTIMONY. LOOKING BACK, IT WOULD HAVE BEEN BETTER TO HAVE PLEADED GUILTY TO MANSLAUGHTER SO THE JURY COULD FOCUS ON THE QUESTION OF INTENT.

I HAVE HOPE THAT EVEN AT THIS STAGE A NEW TRIAL COULD BE GRANTED SO THAT A JURY COULD PROPERLY RULE ON THE CRUCIAL QUESTION OF INTENT TO KILL WHICH WAS BRUSHED OVER BY BOTH THE PROSECUTION AND THE JUDGE. I HAVE REQUESTED THIS REPEATEDLY BUT HAVE BEEN TOLD IT IS NOW IMPOSSIBLE.

I AM TOLD THAT THE BASIC MAXIM IS THAT JUSTICE MUST NOT ONLY BE DONE, IT MUST BE SEEN TO BE DONE. SINCE HE BECAME AWARE OF MY CONFESSION OF RESPONSIBILITY FOR MR. PITT'S DEATH, THE CHIEF JUSTICE WHO PRESIDED OVER MY TRIAL HAS SAID THAT I SHOULD HAVE BEEN TRIED FOR MANSLAUGHTER, NOT MURDER. I TRUST THAT A JURY, TOO, WOULD MAKE A PROPER DETERMINATION IN THE LIGHT OF MY CONFESSION.

PERHAPS YOUR MAJESTY COULD CONSIDER GRANTING A NEW TRIAL SO THAT A JURY MIGHT PROPERLY CONSIDER THE QUESTION OF INTENT. I CAN ONLY HUMBLY BEG THAT YOUR MAJESTY EXTEND THE GIFT OF MERCY SO JUSTICE MAY BE SEEN TO BE DONE.

IF TRIAL OF THE NEW EVIDENCE IS BEYOND YOUR MAJESTY'S POWER TO GRANT, I BEG YOU TO CONSIDER SPARING MY LIFE. I CANNOT TELL YOU HOW DEEPLY SORRY I AM AT MY RESPONSIBILITY FOR WHAT HAS HAPPENED TO MY FRIENDS. MY LIFE IS IN YOUR HANDS. AS GOD IS MY WITNESS, I DID NOT INTEND TO KILL ANYONE.

THE DATE FOR EXECUTION HAS BEEN SET FOR JULY 22, 1975, ONE WEEK FROM TODAY. I HUMBLY REQUEST THAT YOUR MAJESTY GIVE YOUR ATTENTION TO MY PLEA FOR UNDERSTANDING AND MERCY AND GRANT ME MY LIFE.

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2. TEXT HAS BEEN PASSED TO GOVERNOR POSNETT'S OFFICE WHICH HAS PROMISED TO TRANSMIT SAME TO LONDON AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

3. IN VIEW OF IMMINENT EXECUTION DATE AND STRONG POSSIBILITY THAT MOORE SHOULD IN FACT HAVE BEEN TRIED FOR MANSLAUGHTER, NOT MURDER, POST RECOMMENDS DEPARTMENT CONSIDER IMMEDIATE REPRESENTATION BY EMBASSY LONDON TO URGE RETRIAL, CLEMENCY,

OR STAY OF EXECUTION TO PERMIT FORMAL INVESTIGATION OF MOORE'S
CONFESSION. GAWF

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